

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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P R 130925Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 568
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 571

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT IS PGOV
SUBJ: LANDAU-- "THE MAN BEGIN NEEDED IN THE GOVERNMENT" --
LOOKS AT THE CURRENT SCENE

SUMMARY: IN A MAARIV PROFILE-INTERVIEW FOLLOWING HIS
ENTRY INTO THE CABINET, HAIM LANDAU MAKES SOME REVEALING
COMMENTS ON THE VIEW FROM THE INNER CIRCLE OF THE CURRENT
SCENE ON THE EVE OF THE CAIRO-JERUSALEM TALKS. LANDAU
CONFIRMS THAT BEGIN SOUGHT HIS ELECTION AS MINISTER
BECAUSE HE FELT THE NEED FOR A CLOSE FRIEND IN THE
CABINET AT THIS TIME. HE STRESSES THAT BEGIN'S PEACE
PROPOSALS ARE TO BE TAKEN AS A FINAL POSITION, NOT AS
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A NEGOTIATING GAMBIT. PRESSURE TO EXTRACT FURTHER CONCESSIONS
WOULD BE REPELLED. ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE
JUDEA AND SAMARIA IS A RIGHT WHICH WILL ULTIMATELY
BE EXERCISED. SETTLEMENT MOMENTUM MUST BE KEPT UP,
BUT WITH LESS FANFARE AND WITHOUT THE UNNECESSARY
GOVERNMENT PROCLAMATIONS SHARON FAVORED.

1. IN A "MAN IN THE NEWS" INTERVIEW-PROFILE OF HAIM LANDAU, NEWLY ELECTED MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO, ENTITLED 'HAIM LANDAU, THE MAN BEGIN NEEDED IN THE GOV'T.' MAARIV'S TIROSH PROVIDES SOME ILLUMINATING INSIGHTS INTO LANDAU'S AND--CONSIDERING THEIR PERSONAL CLOSENESS AND PRESUMED IDENTITY OF VIEWS--BEGIN'S CURRENT THINKING ON THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. SINCE HIS ELECTION, BEGIN HAS FELT A GROWING NEED FOR A CLOSE CONFIDANTE WITHIN THE CABINET, SOMEONE WHOSE TIES OF PERSONAL LOYALTY ARE UNTINGED BY AMBITION AND WHOSE SUPPORT IS ASSURED IN THE FACE OF ANY EVENTUALITY. (SIMILAR TO THE ROLE GALILI PLAYED IN GOLDA'S CABINET.) LANDAU, AS BEGIN'S FORMER COMRADE-IN-ARMS (HE WAS THE IRGUN'S CHIEF OF STAFF UNDER BEGIN), HERUT PARTY STALWART AND CLOSE FRIEND FOR 34 YEARS, UNIQUELY FILLS THIS ROLE. WHILE BEGIN DID NOT SUCCEED IN BRINGING HIM IN AS MINISTER OF SOCIAL BETTERMENT DUE TO THE DMC'S ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT, LANDAU WAS GRADUALLY DRAWN INTO THE INNER CIRCLE. HE ACCOMPANIED BEGIN DURING THE CARTER-CALLAGHAN TALKS, AND HAS SINCE THEN REGULARLY ATTENDED CABINET SESSIONS.

2. LANDAU EMPHASISES THAT THE PEACE PROPOSAL PRESENTED IN WASHINGTON AND ISMAILIA IS A FINAL POSITION. HE EXPLAINS THAT ISRAEL CONSCIOUSLY REJECTED AN "ORIENTAL BAZAAR" APPROACH, OFFERING ITS MAXIMAL CONCESSIONS FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE START IN ORDER TO OBTAIN AN IMMEDIATE NEGOTIATIONS BREAKTHROUGH. NO SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE THEN, SO IT IS PREMATURE TO PRONOUNCE THIS STRATEGY A FAILURE. IN ANY CASE, NO ONE SHOULD DOUBT THE PRIME MINISTER'S SINCERITY WHEN HE STATES THAT "NO MORE CONCESSIONS CAN BE EXPECTED FROM US." LANDAU'S INITIAL DOUBTS CONCERNING THE ISSUE OF WEST BANK/GAZA SOVEREIGNTY HAVE BEEN LAID TO REST. HIS UNRESERVED SUPPORT FOR THE PEACE PROPOSALS IS BASED ON HIS BELIEF IN BEGIN'S FIRM INTENTION TO ULTIMATELY EXTEND ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY TO THESE TERRITORIES; HE IS WILLING TO TEMPORARILY WAIVE THIS RIGHT IN ORDER "TO GIVE THE PEACE PROCESS A CHANCE." LANDAU (AND AGAIN HERE, PRESUMABLY BEGIN) SUPPORTS "THE BASIC APPROACH AND CONCEPT OF THE NEED FOR SETTLEMENT," BUT RECOGNIZES THE NEED FOR "TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS" AND A SENSE OF TIMING. THERE IS NO NEED FOR THE KIND OF "ALL-EMBRACING, FORMAL" GOVERNMENT DECISION SHARON SOUGHT: THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD INSTEAD BE QUIETLY "CREATING THE REQUIRED POSSIBILITIES" FOR SETTLEMENT TO CONTINUE ON ITS OWN.

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3. LANDAU LISTS THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF THE
ISRAELI PROPOSALS, AS FOLLOWS: 1) OPPOSITION TO A
PALESTINIAN STATE; 2) THE IDF REMAINS IN THE WEST
BANK AND GAZA; 3) THE PLO IS NO LONGER A FACTOR IN OR
PARTNER TO NEGOTIATIONS; 4) ISRAEL RETAINS ITS RIGHT
TO SETTLEMENT IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA; 5) THERE
IS NO QUESTION OF THE FUTURE OF JERUSALEM, BUT ONLY OF
ACCESS TO THE HOLY PLACES. HE STATES THAT THESE
PRINCIPLES WERE "UNDERSTOOD" IN WASHINGTON; THEY WERE
NOT "APPROVED" NOR HAS IT THE ISRAELI INTENTION THAT
THEY SHOULD BE. RATHER, ISRAEL SOUGHT TO BRING THE
US INTO THE PICTURE, AND TO "SEAL OFF POLITICAL
FLANKS THAT HAD FORMERLY BEEN LEFT EXPOSED." LANDAU
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EXPECTS AMERICAN CALLS FOR FLEXIBILITY, BUT WARNS THAT
ANY AMERICAN PRESSURE WOULD BE REPULSED. HIS 60-40 PER CENT
VICTORY OVER KATZ IN THE HERUT CENTRAL COMMITTEE VOTE
WAS IN LANDAU'S VIEW "A GOOD ONE," IN VIEW OF HIS LACK
OF ORGANIZATION AND THE LATE HOUR THE VOTE WAS TAKEN.
THE VOTE DID NOT REPRESENT A PURE REFERENDUM ON THE
PEACE PLAN. SHMUEL KATZ' SUDDEN OPPOSITION IS
ANOMOLOUS: HE, UNLIKE LANDAU HIMSELF, HAD NEVER EX-
PRESSED ANY RESERVATIONS TO BEGIN. LEWIS

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